



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

JANUARY 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING January 9, 2013

In accordance with national requirements of the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Mike Divoll, John McLaughlin and Sal Clarino, board members. No actions were taken by the board.

The above board members constituted the attendance at the regular chapter meeting.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

Treasurer Ed Wiehe reported a balance of \$26,108.90 in the chapter's accounts at Heritage Family Credit Union. The report was approved without dissent.

There have been no additional feedback or suggestions on the revised chapter bylaws, as finalized at the November meeting. Those who receive the newsletter electronically should have gotten a copy of the proposed bylaws attached to the November newsletter. The newsletter was not posted initially on the chapter website, www.vvachapter1.com, but should be by the time you read this. Any comments may be sent to VVA Chapter 1 at 15 Wales St., Rutland, VT 05701-4026 or emailed to Andy Megrath at vthogmanATcomcast.net. (Use the @ symbol instead of AT.) Or write Jack Crowther for a hard copy at 29 Giorgetti Blvd., Rutland, VT 05701.

Dave Mathis reported that after doing some searching on the internet, he was unable to find a solar flagpole light that had any good reviews. The chapter is interested in proper lighting for the two flags at the Rutland County Vietnam War Memorial in Main Street Park, where a streetlight provides almost no illumination at night. Andy Megrath will check with a contact at Green Mountain Power to see if something may be done, such as the installation of a longer streetlight arm that will extend close enough to the monument to provide sufficient lighting.

Andy Megrath informed us that he had submitted his resignation as president of the VVA State Council in December, a position he assumed in June. However, the council, which met Jan. 5, refused to accept the resignation. The matter should be resolved at the council's April 6 meeting in Rutland at Chapter 1 headquarters.

Andy said his resignation came down to differences with former longtime council president John Miner.

Other members of the State Council have since said they would "step up" and help out with council tasks to help Andy with his duties. The long and short of the matter is that Andy will stay on as president until April 6, at which time he'll decide whether to continue.

In other State Council business, Andy noted that the council had received \$20,000 — less \$666 for late filing of paperwork — for its service officer program. Service officers are volunteers who assist vets in filing claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs. However, that money has to be matched by the State Council. That obligation, Andy said "is basically going to fall back onto the chapters." In the past, the council asked for \$10,000 but had a problem matching that, Andy noted. "John (Miner) asked for \$20,000, and I'm still not sure how we're going to match it," Andy said.

Moving on to legislative matters, Andy noted that on Jan. 15, the veterans service organizations of the state would visit Montpelier to meet with lawmakers and advocate for veterans issues. Andy planned to attend representing the VVA State Council, as well as the Dodge House for homeless veterans, on whose board he sits.

Jack Crowther moved that Andy be allowed to charge to the Chapter 1 credit card lunches for Christine Morgan, director of the Dodge House, and two female residents who will also attend. Seconded by Dave Mathis. Passed unanimously.

Andy reported a request from Rebecca Majoya, director of the Mentor Connector group, for financial assistance. Jack Crowther, who has worked with the Rutland County organization in the past, had encouraged her to make the request. Her letter noted that in the last year, the organization paired six mentors with the children of parents active in the military. The group has 108 community mentors and supports 17 school programs. The program has operated for the last seven years.

Jack made a motion to donate \$500 to the organization. Seconded by Dave Mathis. Passed unanimously.

In response to a question from John McLaughlin, Andy said that when he attended the session for veterans in Montpelier on Jan. 15, he would raise the issue of veterans disability benefits being included in "household income" on the Vermont income tax return. The benefits are not taxable under federal or state rules, but they are counted as "household income." That can effectively increase a veteran's property taxes, because property taxes are reduced under state law if household income falls below certain levels.

Andy said the veterans group representatives would have a chance to sit down with with Rep. Helen Head, chair of the General, Housing and Military Affairs Committee, and committee members to discuss that issue. A 1 p.m. session with the committee will allow each of the veterans service organizations to speak on issues of concern. The household income issue will be one such concern. Another topic will be an effort to have the word "veteran" added to the a veterans driver's license, if the veteran wishes it. Veterans are also pushing to have the first \$2,500 of income of retired military members exempted from taxation. The amount is a reduction from the \$5,000 exemption previously sought.

Andy noted a generous donation from member Nelson Burke of Dewey, Ariz., of \$250 for flags at the Rutland County Vietnam War Memorial and the state Vietnam War Memorial at the Sharon rest stop on Interstate 89.

The chapter welcomes Phillip Savery of Rutland as a returning member.

Andy Megrath wants to remind members who have shared their email addresses with him to be sure and notify him if the address changes. His email is vthogmanATcomcast.net. If you receive this newsletter electronically, this will insure you keep receiving it in a timely manner. In addition, if you are on the chapter's shared email list, be sure to notify Dick Doyle at rpdoyle3ATmyfairpoint.net of any change. Again, use @ instead of AT.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, AT 6 P.M.
AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT.
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET BRIEFLY BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING.**

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, secretary

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

MARCH 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

March 13, 2013

The Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer, Jack Crowther, secretary; and Mike Divoll, John McLaughlin, Dick Doyle and Bill Whitney, board members. No actions were taken by the board. The above-named members constituted the attendance at the regular meeting.

The minutes of the January meeting were approved without dissent.

Treasurer Ed Wiehe reported a total of \$25,777.68 in the chapter's bank accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

A moment of silence was observed for Jake Jacobsen, 68, who died March 4 as a result of a fire at his home in Clarendon. It was Jake who partnered with Don Bodette in the founding of VVA Chapter 1, the first in the nation, in 1980. Jake succeeded Don to become the second president of the chapter. Jake leaves his wife, Marilyn; two sons and a daughter; and four grandchildren. A memorial service will be held Sunday, March 24, at 1 p.m. at the new Armed Forces Reserve Training Center, 2143 Post Road in Rutland Town. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Wounded Warriors Project, P.O. Box 75817, Topeka, KS 66675.

Andy Megrath said he has formally stepped down as president of the VVA State Council. The council had refused to accept his resignation in January, but a combination of personal matters and conflicts related to the State Council position convinced Andy to stick with his decision. As a result he will not be attending meetings in Washington, D.C., of the national VVA state council presidents. A representative of a northern Vermont chapter may be willing to take over as State Council president.

The next State Council meeting was to have been April 6 in Rutland, but John Miner, president of the Bennington VVA chapter has asked to change it to April 7, a Sunday, in Bennington to coincide with a parade there marking the 50th anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War. It is tied in with a national observance. Miner was president of the State Council for many years, but health issues have reportedly forced him to curtail his activities.

Andy said the chapter's biennial filing with the state for a non-profit organization has been taken care of.

Andy reported on his meeting with the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council the day before in Montpelier. Apparently there was little or no attention to the question of the state taxing so-called "rip tickets," which accounts for the large majority of Chapter 1's income. A tax on the tickets might dry up that source of income.

Turning to another issue, Andy said a legislative change to make five moose-hunting permits for veterans available to all vets and not just Iraq or Afghanistan vets was in bill form. Free admission for vets to all state parks and identification of veterans on their driver's licenses (if they choose) are other measures that the GVAC members are pushing. A Green Mountain Passport for free entry to state parks for day use is already available for those 62 and over and disabled veterans.

The governor's council is also pushing a \$2,500 exemption from taxation for military retiree pay; that is a reduction from \$5,000, an amount proposed previously but never passed. Exemption of disability payments from "household income" calculations is also in the hopper. "Household income" affects property tax exemption calculations. Also in the works is an "I Support Veterans" vanity plate.

July 27 will mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean Conflict with the armistice agreement. The event will be recognized in Vermont with a presentation of medals, the event most likely to be held in Montpelier.

April 10 will be the chapter's annual meeting. After brief discussion, Jack Crowther moved that the current officers and directors be nominated for the coming year. Seconded by Dick Doyle. Approved without dissent. Any other regular member who is interested in serving in an office is welcome to run for any of the offices or directors' positions. Simply contact an officer or director to have your name placed in

nomination, or attend the meeting April 10 and express your interest.

The current officers and directors are: Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Dick Doyle, Bill Whitney, John McLaughlin, Sal Clarino and Mike Divoll, directors. Also up for a vote are changes in the chapter bylaws.

Andy said Bub Crosby was willing to continue serving as chaplain. Andy said he (Andy) would probably be willing to serve as a rep to the State Council, joining John McLaughlin and Dave Mathis to make up the chapter's three representatives. Andy said one State Council issue he is interested in is possibly making a cash donation to the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington for an item of need rather than sponsoring the annual picnic. Andy reported that after dealing with a number of problems in recent years, "things are going okay right now" at the Veterans Home.

Andy noted that Gov. Peter Shumlin had visited the Dodge House for homeless veterans the previous week, but that portion of his visit attracted no press coverage. Andy, who serves on the Dodge House board, did take the occasion to meet the new director of the VA Hospital in White River Junction. She is Deborah Amdur, who was appointed in December. Andy told her the CBOC (Community Based Outpatient Clinic) in Rutland was currently understaffed. She told Andy they have hired a receptionist and are looking to hire another primary care person.

Andy said Richard Reed, the director of the Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs, was going to be doing some work as a service officer, helping with vets' claims, in addition to his director duties. The office has two other people on staff and is trying to hire a third person.

Andy attended a Northeast Kingdom Veterans Summit at Lyndon State College on Saturday, including participation by Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peter Welch. Andy sat on the PTSD panel with two other Vietnam veterans. Another summit is planned for next year.

Andy has purchased two flags to replace those at the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Rutland.

Jack Crowther moved that the chapter pay for lunch for Andy and Richard Reed, the director of the Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs, who met recently. Seconded by Bill Whitney. Passed unanimously.

There was further discussion of how to cover a \$20,000 required match for money received from the National VVA for state service officer programs. Some fund-raising by an individual is under way, but the status of it was uncertain. The Vermont VVA State Council will have to either match the \$20,000 or return it.

Andy said it appears that Green Mountain Power will be able to put a long streetlight arm on the power pole on South Main Street nearest the Vietnam Memorial so that the flags there will be illuminated at night in accord with proper flag protocol.

John McLaughlin moved to appropriate \$150 for the expenses of a woman staying at the Dodge House who is seeking to enter the Ms. Veteran America 2013 pageant. She is working three jobs and going to school in her effort to re-establish her life. The money will help subsidize a trip to Washington, D.C., to participate. Seconded by Dick Doyle. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, AT 6 P.M.
AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT.
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET BRIEFLY BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

APRIL 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING **April 10, 2013**

The Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer, Jack Crowther, secretary; and Mike Divoll, John McLaughlin, Sal Clarino and Bill Whitney, board members. No actions were taken by the board. The above-named members and George Henry constituted the attendance at the regular meeting, which followed.

The minutes of the March meeting were approved without dissent.

Treasurer Ed Wiehe reported a total of \$25,946.60 in the chapter's bank accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

President Andy Megrath appointed Secretary Jack Crowther to preside at the annual meeting of the chapter. As there were no additional nominees offered for the positions of officers or board members, Jack invited a motion to elect the previously nominated officers and board member as a slate. George Henry moved to accept the slate. Seconded by Sal Clarino.

The current officers and directors were: Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Dick Doyle, Bill Whitney, John McLaughlin, Sal Clarino and Mike Divoll, directors.

The motion to elect the slate passed unanimously.

In appointed positions, Dick Doyle remains as membership chair and Bub Crosby as chaplain.

Jack Crowther moved that the proposed changes in the Chapter 1 bylaws be adopted. Seconded by Mike Divoll. Passed unanimously.

Andy Megrath presented a letter from Richard Reed, state veteran services director, inviting members of the chapter to attend the state's annual Memorial Day Ceremony held at the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph Center on Thursday, May 30, at 3 p.m. The event will feature a keynote speech by Gov. Peter Shumlin and a parade of honor guards commanded by Lt. Col. Donald Singer, U.S. Army (Ret.) The ceremony will be held at the Circle of Flags near the entrance of the cemetery. Parking is available. Any questions can be directed to Ed Burkart, toll-free, at (888)-666-9844 or ed.burkart@state.vt.us.

Andy Megrath noted that the chapter was authorized to have three delegates to the national VVA convention, to be held August 13-17 in Jacksonville, Fla. Though Andy has attended in the past as a State Council representative, he will not be attending this year. Anyone interested in attending should get in touch with Andy at vthogman@comcast.net.

Chapter 1 member Bob Ramunto invites chapter members, families and friends to a pancake breakfast at the Brick Church on Middle Road in Clarendon on April 27 from 8 to 10 a.m. to benefit the Wounded Warriors Project and the Dodge House for homeless veterans in Rutland. Bob oversees a military ministry at the church that seeks to reach out to veterans. The cost of the breakfast is free to veterans, \$1 for children 12 and under, and \$5 for everyone else. All proceeds of the breakfast will be split between the two organizations listed.

The annual picnic at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington will take place Saturday, June 29. There was some discussion at the last meeting about making a donation to the home in lieu of the picnic, but the State Council has decided to continue the tradition of the picnic.

Perry Melvin of Shelburne is the new State Council president, replacing Andy Megrath, whose resignation was reported in the last newsletter. Perry is a member and president of VVA Chapter 829 in Essex Junction. Lenny Derby, president of Brattleboro Chapter 843 continues as vice president.

Chapter 1 member Kerry O'Hara has made another contribution of books to the Chapter 1 library. The books are available to members and others to borrow: The latest set of military-related books include: Letter from Vietnam, edited by Bill Adler; Through the Valley, by James F Humphries; Land With No Sun, by Ted G. Arthurs; Seawolves, by Daniel E. Kelly; Memoirs of a Navy Seal, by Robert A. Gormly; and The Price of Honor, by David Hackworth.

The following Chapter 1 members have chosen to have their email addresses listed in the newsletter to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply email Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's email is rpdoyle3@myfairpoint.net. Mass mailings to the list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

Also note that you can have your newsletter delivered by email without putting your name on the list that appears in the newsletter. Just make it clear to Dick. Electronic delivery of the newsletter, currently about 40, saves the chapter postage. Names in boldface represent additions or recent changes. Here's the list:

Personal email addresses concealed

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, AT 6 P.M.
AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT.
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET BRIEFLY BEFORE THE START OF THE
MEETING.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026
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JUNE 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

June 12, 2013

The Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Bill Whitney and Mike Divoll, board members. No actions were taken by the board. The above-named members and Robin Mainwaring-Healey made up the attendance at the regular meeting, which followed.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved without dissent.

Treasurer Ed Wiehe reported a total of \$30,111.16 in the chapter's bank accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

President Andy Megrath reported that Tom Purdy of Orwell has joined the chapter, having been an unaffiliated member of VVA.

Andy distributed some materials related to the coming national VVA convention in August in Jacksonville, Fla., including pending resolutions. Chapter 1 will probably not send anyone, although we are entitled to three delegates. Anyone interested in attending should contact Andy at vthogman@comcast.net.

Don Amorosi of Glens Falls, N.Y., sent a letter urging members to contact their congressmen to urge the U.S. government to do whatever is necessary to bring back a soldier, Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, missing in Afghanistan since 2009 and reported to be a prisoner of the Taliban in Pakistan. Just this month, Bergdahl's family in Idaho received a letter they believed was from him, according to CBS news.

Andy reported on a meeting of the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council in May. The council represents veterans' interests to the governor, particularly on matters that require legislation. One measure that passed the Legislature is a veteran identification label on the Vermont driver's license, taking effect July 1. The veteran must request the veteran designation. A separate pending effort would allow people to get "I Support Veterans" on their license plates. The plate would cost \$25, with proceeds benefitting the Veterans Fund. The fund consists of money raised by voluntary contributions on the state tax return.

The Green Mountain Passport providing for free day-use entry for life into Vermont state parks is now available at local town clerks' offices. Any veteran can now get the pass for \$2 from the town clerk. As before, anyone 62 years of age or older can also get the pass.

Andy noted the income from the voluntary contributions section of the state income tax form had declined from \$48,000 to \$36,514. Recipients last year included the Dodge House for homeless veterans in Rutland, \$5,000; and the VVA State Council, \$3,206. A committee decides on the distribution of the funds.

Still on the list of goals is an effort to exempt disability payments from the household income calculation on the state income tax form. The household income calculation is used to determine eligibility for property tax relief.

Also on the not-yet-achieved list is some level of exemption of military pensions from state income taxes. In the past, veterans have requested a \$5,000 exemption, without success. More recently, that's been reduced to \$2,500, without result so far. Some states exempt a portion or all of military retiree pay, but not Vermont.

One measure that didn't pass but which was nevertheless good for veterans was a proposal for a 3 percent tax on "ripoff" tickets. Various charitable groups, including Chapter 1, rely on sales of the tickets for income.

Andy reported that administration of the local-option of exemption of a portion of local property taxes for disabled veterans went smoothly this year. Depending on the town, a veteran who is at least 50 percent disabled can have up to \$40,000 knocked off of his or her property valuation.

Andy sits on the Legislative Committee of the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council. The committee plans a series of meetings for August to hear the requests of veterans groups for legislation in the next session.

On another matter, Andy noted that the Dodge House resident whom Chapter 1 was helping pay off a delinquent student loan has been able to resume regular payments to the Vermont Student Assistance Corp. That means the chapter's help dealing with collection agency payments is no longer required.

There was discussion of the proposed Korean War monument in Rutland's Main Street Park. The sentiment was to support the project once a formal request comes from the organization leading the effort.

The Moving Wall, a replica of The Wall, commemorating Vietnam War dead, was scheduled to be in Wilmington, Vt., from June 13 to 17.

The Korean War Veterans Committee in Rutland is planning a get-together July 28, a Sunday, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the signing of the armistice to end the fighting in Korea. The event will be held at the Franklin Conference Center with a social hour, buffet, Korean War exhibit, and guest speakers. Further information may be had by calling chairman George Bates at 773-2947.

Chapter 1 member Kerry O'Hara has made another contribution of books to the Chapter 1 library. The books are available to members and others to borrow: The latest set of military-related books include: Night of the Silver Stars, by William R. Phillips; We Were Soldiers Once and Young, by Harold Moore and Joseph Galloway; We Are Soldiers Still, also by Moore and Galloway; LBJ's Hired Gun, by John J. Gebhart; Raider, by Charles W. Sasser; The Eyes of the Eagle, by Gary A. Linderer; The Last Run, by Leonard B. Scott; Last Man Out, by James E. Parker Jr.; The War in I Corps, by Richard A. Guidry; A Field of Innocence, by Jack Estes; and Green Knight, Red Mourning, by Richard E. Ogden.

A reminder: The annual picnic at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington will take place Saturday, June 29.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE CHAPTER WILL NOT MEET IN JULY AND AUGUST. THE NEXT MEETING
WILL BE WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 11, AT 6 P.M. AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES
AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL
MEET BRIEFLY BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

SEPTEMBER 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

Sept. 11, 2013

The Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Bill Whitney, John McLaughlin and Mike Divoll, board members. No actions were taken by the board.

The chapter welcomed Bill Ellwood as a new life member. It was noted his name is on the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans War Memorial incorrectly. It will be corrected

The minutes of the June meeting were approved without dissent.

Treasurer Ed Wiehe reported a total of \$29,967.31 in the chapter's bank accounts. The report was unanimously approved.

President Andy Megrath circulated a presidential citation commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War and a pamphlet on the commemoration. The commemoration began in 2012 and will continue through 2025.

The Brain Injury Association of Vermont will hold its 25th Annual Brain Injury Conference Tuesday, Oct. 8, at 2013 at the Sheraton Conference Center in Burlington. Conference brochures can be down loaded from www.biavt.org. Registration and payment can also be done at the same site. Keynote speaker will be Kevin Pearce, a snowboarder who suffered a traumatic brain injury in Utah in 2009 while training for the Olympic trials.

The 25th Annual DMZ to Delta Dance, sponsored by VVA Chapter 227 will be held Nov. 10 in Alexandria, Va. More details can be had at www.vva227.org.

Andy reported membership levels as follows: 136 regular members, of whom 101 are paid life members, two are life members making time payments, and 33 are dues-paying members paying for 1-3 years at a time. We have five associate members, including two life members.

After a brief discussion, Dave Mathis moved to order a lockbox at a cost of about \$185 to keep a flagpole key at the Rutland County Vietnam War Memorial. This will allow the city Fire Department to unlock the flagpole and lower the flag to half-mast when other flags in the city are lowered. Seconded by Jack Crowther. Passed unanimously.

Andy noted that the Legislative Committee of the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council was to meet Sept. 16. The group will discuss priorities for the coming legislative session.

The VVA State Council will meet Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Chapter 1 offices in Rutland at 11 a.m. All members are welcome to attend and see what the statewide VVA organization in Vermont does.

Andy reported that a woman from a neighborhood support group in the southwest part of the city asked if the chapter might help clean up the outside of a veteran's property. The resident, a Vietnam vet, is unable to do it. Several members agreed to help out, assuming the resident gives his permission.

Jack Crowther showed one of the placards from the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans War Memorial, noting its deterioration after 13 years of exposure to the weather. He recommended that the placards be replaced. He made a motion to that effect, seconded by Bill Whitney. Passed unanimously. In conjunction with the replacements, we will update the Honor Roll of those who served in

Vietnam after entering the service from Rutland County. It was decided to replace the plaques Nov. 9, two days before Veterans Day. That means that anyone wishing to have a name added to the Honor Roll should submit their DD 214 to Andy Megrath, in care of VVA Chapter 1, 15 Wales St., Rutland, VT 05701-4026. [Note: A day after the meeting, Jack Crowther proposed that the three plaques giving the history of Chapter 1, the Vietnam War, and the local War Memorial, be installed as soon as they are complete so as to be in place for visitors during fall foliage. Andy Megrath agreed, so that will be done. The updated Honor Roll will be installed Nov. 9, as agreed to at the meeting.]

Andy took part in a motorcycle escort by the Patriot Guard of the remains of Jake Jacobsen, a founder and past president of Chapter 1, to the Vermont Veterans Cemetery in Randolph on Aug. 19. Jake died March 4 as a result of a fire at his home. City police escorted the motorcycle procession out of the city. Members of the Air National Guard folded the flag at the cemetery and presented it to Jake's wife, Marilyn, and the family. The tall flags display was part of the ceremony.

"TELEHEALTH: What is it?" is the title of a presentation Tuesday, Sept. 24, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. "on how Telehealth services at the VA is changing the health care delivery model while improving access to care." Attend in person at the following locations around Vermont and New Hampshire: White River Junction VA Medical Center, 215 N. Main St., White River Junction, Vt., in the Canteen Dining Room (enter Emergency Room doors); FEA/Colchester, Vt., CBOC, 162 Hegeman Ave., Unit 100, Colchester; Littleton, N.H., CBOC, 685 Meadow St., Suite 4, Littleton; Rutland, Vt., CBOC, 232 West St., Rutland; Newport, Vt., CBOC, 1734 Crawford Farm Rd., Newport; Keene, N.H., Outpatient Clinic, 640 Marlboro St., Route 101, Keene. Or call in from home at 1-800-767-1750, access code 95096#. Questions may be sent by email to WRJ.CHSS@va.gov.

Chapter 1 member Kerry O'Hara has made another contribution of Vietnam War related books to the Chapter 1 library. The books are available to members and others to borrow: The latest set of books include: What It Is Like to Go to War, by Karl Marlantes; Night Work, by Dennis Foley; Charlie Company, by Peter Goldman; Platoon Bravo Company, by Robert Hemphill; Never Without Heroes, by Lawrence C. Vetter; Diary of an Airborne Ranger, by Frank Johnson; Down South, by William H. Hardwick; The Price of Exit, by Tom Marshall; Sergeant Major, by Bruce H. Norton; and Don't Bunch Up, by William Van Zanten.

Chapter 1 maintains a list of members who would like to have their email addresses listed in the newsletter every now and then, to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to this list can simply email Dick Doyle, who maintains the list. Dick's email is rpdoyle3@myfairpoint.net. Mass mailings to the list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

Also note that you can have your newsletter delivered by email without putting your name on the list that appears in the newsletter. In that case, just make it clear to Dick that your email is only for sending the newsletter. Electronic delivery of the newsletter saves the chapter postage.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Crowther, Secretary

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THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT. THE BOARD
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OCTOBER 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING

Oct. 9, 2013

The Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Ed Wiehe, treasurer; Jack Crowther, secretary; and Bill Whitney, John McLaughlin and Dick Doyle, board members. No actions were taken by the board.

A total of eight members attended the regular meeting.

The secretary's minutes were approved without dissent.

Treasurer Ed Wiehe reported a total of \$29,634.99 in the chapter's accounts. The report was approved unanimously.

The 15th Annual Scouting's Salute to Veterans Parade will be held in Morrisville at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 2. Check-in is at 9:30 a.m. A ceremony will follow the parade. Further details may be found at www.scoutingvermont.org.

President Andy Megrath noted that the VVA State Council is soliciting donations from members and will soon be approaching the chapters as well. The fundraising letter mentions two specific programs for veterans that it is actively supporting: The Veterans Outreach & Family Resource Center in Bennington and the Ruck Up Program in Keene, N.H., both of which are outreach and resource programs for veterans and their families. Donations are tax deductible.

Andy reported that the Veterans affairs office in Montpelier brought in \$5.9 million in benefits in the last fiscal year. There are three service officers who assist veterans and widows in obtaining benefits. This information came out at the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council meeting on Sept. 16. Also discussed was the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Randolph Center. The cemetery owns 118 acres, of which only 20 in active use.

"We went after the legislators to appropriate \$250,000 so that we could get a master plan for the cemetery," Andy said. The money was appropriated last year. The design company selected has to have the design in by the first of April of next year. Once the design is approved, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will reimburse the state. From that point on, with a master plan, the VA will pay for any improvements. Andy has participated in two recent burial ceremonies at the cemetery.

The governor's council will be at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington Oct. 22 for its next meeting, and on Nov. 12, the group will meet with the governor. One of the bills to be introduced for action in the coming session relates to getting retirement credit for military service if one's service as a state employee is interrupted by military service. Rep. Bill Canfield of Fair Haven will introduce the bill, which is similar to one that became law in Maryland.

The recent VVA State Council meeting saw an accounting of service officer results from A.J. Paige, who has veteran clients in New Hampshire and Vermont. Andy summarized the results as "fairly good."

In related action, the council basically agreed to spend most of its available money to help provide office space for the service officer program in Keene, N.H. and Bennington. The Keene office, from which A.J. Paige sometimes works, services parts of Vermont, as well as New Hampshire. The council voted to provide \$4,000 in rent money to each facility. The expenditures are in part the reason for the fund-raising effort by the council, Andy indicated.

Andy reported that Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki said disability pay will be interrupted if the government shutdown continues.

More than a dozen Vietnam vets, or in some cases their survivors, have sent in service records to have their names entered on the Honor Roll for the Rutland County Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Andy will compile a list when the deadline of Oct. 15 arrives.

We agreed to hold a small ceremony on Veterans Day, Monday, Nov. 11, at 10 a.m. to install the new Honor Roll. There are now more than 300 names on the Honor Roll, compared to the initial list of about 125 in 2000, when the memorial was dedicated.

Jack Crowther and Dave Mathis recently installed new copies of the other three placards at the memorial that give the histories of Chapter 1, the memorial and the Vietnam War. The old placards, 13 years old, were weatherbeaten and dingy.

The chapter approved reimbursing Andy \$17 for doughnuts provided to the State Council at its September meeting at the chapter office in Rutland.

Andy Megrath appointed Jack Crowther sergeant at arms for the purpose of maintaining order by limiting competing conversations during formal meetings.

It was noted that veterans can now be identified as vets on their driver's licenses. However, they have to request it when their license renews by sending a copy of their DD 214 to the state Veterans Affairs Office in Montpelier at the time their license renews. Some merchants give discounts to vets, and the license would thus help establish the vet's status.

Chapter 1 maintains a list of members who would like to have their email addresses listed in the newsletter every now and then to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to this list can simply email Dick Doyle, who maintains the list. Dick's email is rpdoyle3@myfairpoint.net. Mass mailings to the list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

Also note that you can have your newsletter delivered by email without putting your name on the list that appears in the newsletter. In that case, just make it clear to Dick that your email is only for sending the newsletter. Electronic delivery of the newsletter saves the chapter postage. Here's the list. Names in boldface are recent changes or additions.

Personal email addresses concealed

Respectfully submitted, Jack Crowther, Secretary

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11, AT 6 P.M. AT
THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT. THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS WILL MEET BRIEFLY BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING.**

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026

Address Correction Requested



Vietnam Veterans Of America

Chapter One

www.vvachapter1.com

DECEMBER 2013



MINUTES OF CHAPTER MEETING Dec. 11, 2013

The Chapter 1 Board of Directors gathered in advance of the regular Chapter 1 meeting. Present were Andy Megrath, president; Dave Mathis, vice president; Jack Crowther, secretary; and John McLaughlin and Sal Clarino, board members. The above members constituted the attendance at the regular meeting.



Ed Wiehe with his train display at the fall train show of the Rutland Railway Association in Rutland. Ed, Chapter 1 treasurer for the past two years, passed away Dec. 13.

In sadness, the meeting learned of the resignation for health reasons of Treasurer Ed Wiehe, who had filled the position since the spring of 2011. Ed passed away Friday, Dec. 13. Several of us visited him and his wife, Bette, at his home in Clarendon.

The day before he died, Ed professed to feeling good except for some chest bruising where he had received CPR a couple of weeks previously. He showed off his model train collection and chatted amiably.

Ed apologized (of course he didn't need to) at having to give up the duties of treasurer, which he carried out with care and dedication. Before

Ed's death, his son Edwin was able to fly home for a visit from Japan, where he is a teacher. The Wiehes have four other children. An Army veteran of Vietnam, Ed was 68.

President Andy Megrath has appointed John McLaughlin as treasurer, and we're grateful for his willingness to step up. As a result, there is an opening on the board of directors. Anyone interested in the position should make their interest known to an officer or board member, keeping in mind that the position carries a responsibility to attend meetings as regularly as possible.

The minutes of the October meeting were approved without dissent.

Andy presented Jack Crowther with a gavel and sounding block to help in carrying out his duties as sergeant at arms. The appointment was made in an effort to limit multiple conversations going on during our business meetings.

Andy Megrath and John McLaughlin reported that the total of funds in the chapter's accounts was \$32,413.04, as of Nov. 30.

Jack Crowther volunteered to check with local solar companies to see if they might suggest a solar-powered flagpole light to illuminate the flags at the Vietnam memorial in Main Street Park. The flag receives some illumination from a nearby streetlight, but is not truly lit at night as it should be.

Chapter 1 member Kerry O'Hara has continued his donation of books about Vietnam and the military to our library. His latest donations include: Ripcord, by Keith W. Nolan; Inside the LRRPS, by Michael Lee Lanning; Charlie Rangers, by Don Ericson and John Rotundo; Hill 488, by Ray Hildreth and Charles Sasser; Phantom Warriors, by Gary Linderer; The Deer Hunter, by E.M. Corder; When Thunder Rolled, by Ed Rasimus; The Walking Dead, by Craig Roberts and Charles Sasser; Charlie Mike, by Leonard Scott; Good to Go, by Harry Constance and Randall Fuerst; Seal Warrior, by J. Terry Riebling; On Point, by Roger Hayes; and Tiger Force, by Michael Sallah and Mitch Weiss.

The following Chapter 1 members have chosen to have their email addresses listed in the newsletter to share with other members. Anyone who would like to add their name to the list can simply email Dick Doyle, who is maintaining the list. Dick's email is rpdoyle3@myfairpoint.net. Mass mailings to the list should be limited to Chapter 1 business.

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Personal email addresses concealed

Respectfully submitted, Jack Crowther, Secretary

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26, AT 6 P.M. AT THE CHAPTER OFFICES AT THE VFW, 15 WALES ST., RUTLAND, VT. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET BRIEFLY BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING.

VVA Chapter 1
15 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701-4026
Address Correction Requested